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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0210
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 7273
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 1282
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI IMMEDIATE 6589
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE IMMEDIATE 2767
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR IMMEDIATE 1189
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 2605
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHWSMRC/USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 002908

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/04/2017

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: RED MOSQUE -- SITREP ISLAMABAD 15:30 LOCAL

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 02905

- [1B.](#) ISLAMABAD 2829
- [1C.](#) ISLAMABAD 2468
- [1D.](#) ISLAMABAD 2334
- [1E.](#) ISLAMABAD 2270
- [1F.](#) ISLAMABAD 1846
- [1G.](#) ISLAMABAD 1688
- [1H.](#) ISLAMABAD 1647

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson, for reasons 1.4 (b) (d)

11. (C) Summary: The Pakistan Army has taken command of government forces in the immediate area of the Lal Masjid (Red Mosque). Approximately 700 people inside the mosque surrendered at the urging of the government; approximately 3,200 remain. Prime Minister Aziz told visiting Codel Davis July 4 that the situation was unfolding better than expected, and that the government would continue to allow time for additional militants and occupants to surrender. EAC convened and decided to move Embassy staff living in the vicinity of the Red Mosque until the situation is resolved; July 4 activities at the EMR will continue as planned. Small protests against government action on Lal Masjid took place in the Northwest Frontier Province, FATA, and Balochistan. End Summary.

Timeline

12. (C) Law enforcement authorities and militants at Lal Masjid continued to exchange sporadic gunfire into the early morning hours of July 4. As of 15:30 local time, authorities had not launched a major offensive operation against the mosque. The government instead encouraged militants, women, and children in the mosque to surrender by certain deadlines, each of which was extended as occupants continued to surrender. At this time, approximately 500 male and 200 female occupants have surrendered to authorities; police estimated approximately 3,200 remained in the mosque compound.

13. (C) At approximately 2:00 AM July 3, the government announced over loudspeakers a 3:30 AM deadline for the militants' surrender. The deadline passed without any of the militants surrendering, but rangers and police did not launch an operation against the mosque. At an undetermined time during the night, authorities cut off the mosque's

electricity and water. Embassy sources reported the mosque's backup generator was not functioning.

¶4. (C) At approximately 9:00 AM July 4, authorities announced that militants and occupants wishing to surrender before a new 11:00 AM deadline could meet their parents, whom Interior Ministry officials had contacted during the night, at a nearby market; those who surrendered were promised 5,000 rupees (about \$80) for the journey home. (Note: Many mosque occupants were from poorer parts of the Northwest Frontier Province. End Note.) Between 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM, approximately 120 individuals (100 male and 20 female) surrendered to authorities and met family members at nearby Aabpara market. Media reported law enforcement authorities searched the men and women, asked them to confirm their families' names, and questioned many of the male occupants who had surrendered. Embassy sources reported certain surrendering male occupants suspected of criminal acts were detained for further questioning and might face legal prosecution.

¶5. (C) Minutes after 11:00 AM, authorities opened fire on the mosque and militants. After a brief exchange of fire between rangers and militants, law enforcement signaled a cease-fire and announced an extension of the deadline for occupants wishing to surrender to 12:00 PM. Another 50 men and women surrendered before noon, and authorities again extended the surrender deadline. Authorities told Embassy sources they hoped to continue extending the deadline as long as occupants kept surrendering in steady numbers. Several of those who surrendered told embassy sources the situation inside the mosque was tense; there was a core group of committed militants urging others not to surrender.

ISLAMABAD 00002908 002 OF 002

Senior Officials Meet, Negotiations Begin

¶6. (C) Prime Minister Aziz met with senior government officials and Pakistan's Council of Ulema (respected Islamic leadership) throughout the night to discuss the Red Mosque situation. Maulana Fazlur Rehman, leader of the JUI-F political party and Council of Ulema, mediated between government officials and Red Mosque leader mullah Abdur Ghazi on July 3 and 4.

EAC and Embassy Action

¶7. (C) Post held an Emergency Action Committee at 2:15 PM on July 4. American personnel in residences in the vicinity of the Red Mosque will be moved and will stay with other embassy staff until the area is reopened. The Red Mosque area will be off-limits for Americans until further notice. A revised Warden Notice is being distributed, and RSO initiated a phone cascade on July 4 to ensure all American staff were safe and accounted for. The EAC agreed security precautions for July 4 activities at the Embassy compound were appropriate, and the event would continue as planned.

PATTERSON